Parent STAR Tutoring Program

Comprehension Passages

Listed in order of difficulty

Fiction

Max and Mouse

Max is a little black cat. Mouse is a big black bear. Max and Mouse are best friends. They live together in a zoo.

No one knows from where Max the cat came. One day she just appeared and walked into Mouse's cage. Mouse let Max eat his food. They lay in the sun together. They took naps together. They became best friends.

Then the zoo put Mouse in another cage. Max couldn't find her friend. Max cried and tried to find Mouse. She wouldn't eat.

They took her to Mouse's new cage and put her inside. Max ran to Mouse. The cat and the bear were so happy they licked each other. Then, Max laid down next to Mouse soon the two friends were fast asleep.

Help from a Butterfly

Tina and Todd stepped into the garden store. They looked at all the rows of flowers. There were red flowers, yellow flowers, and purple flowers.

Tina and Todd slowly walked up and down the rows. Tina found a flower with two colors of pink. Todd found a flower with orange and black petals. Grandmother had said they could each have a flower. But there were so many! Which ones should they pick?

Pete's Surprising Seeds

Pete looked at the little brown seeds. He had to plant them in just the right place. He knew they would grow into beautiful flowers.

Pete's older brother, Ben came into the backyard. "What are you doing? Ben asked Pete.

"I want to plant these seeds. They will grow into beautiful flowers," said Pete.

"Ha!" said Ben. "Those seeds won't grow. They are too small."

Pete looked at the seeds again. They were small; they looked like they would grow.

Pete dug four small holes in the black dirt. Pete put the seeds in the soil. He checked to see if they would get sunlight. He put more dirt over them. Pete got some water and put the water on the seeds. Every day Pete looked at the seeds. Every day Ben said, "Those seeds won't grow."

One day, Pete was watering his seeds. He saw some little green thing sticking out of the ground. Could those be his seeds? Pete waited and watched. Soon, the little green things turned into stems. He watched the stems grow. The stems had red, orange, and yellow flowers on them. Pete was happy. Ben was surprised.

The Dove and the Ant

One day an ant went to the river to get a drink. She fell in the water and was very frightened.

A dove sitting in a tree saw the ant. She felt sorry for the ant. She got a branch from the tree in her beak. Then she flew down and threw the branch in the water.

The ant crawled on the branch. She used the branch to sail back to the shore. The dove had saved the ant's life.

A few days later, the ant saw a man trying to catch the dove with a net. The ant didn't want the man to hurt her friend so she stung the man on the foot. When the man looked down at his foot, the dove flew away. The ant had saved the dove's life.

Smaller and Smaller

Four animal friends were sitting on a hill. Cow saw some trees on a hill far away. "Look how small those trees on that little hill are," said Cow. "They are the smallest trees I have ever seen."

The other animals were surprised to see how little the trees were too.

"I think I'll go see just how small those trees are," said Dog. Off he ran.

"Oh my," said Horse as they all looked at Dog. "Look how small Dog is getting. He is getting smaller and smaller. Goodness me! Now I can't see him at all. This is very strange."

Cow said, "I must see if I can help Dog." Cow began running to the trees.

Horse watched as Cow got smaller and smaller. "Oh no!" said Horse to Duck. "Look how small Cow is now. She is getting smaller and smaller. Goodness me! Now I can't see her at all. This is very strange."

Duck said, "Maybe they are getting smaller because they are running. I will fly to the trees. If I fly, I may not get smaller."

So, Duck flapped her wings and flew away.

Horse watched as Duck flew. Duck got smaller and smaller. Soon she was just a little black dot in the sky. "Oh no!" said Horse. "Duck is shrinking too! Now I can't see her at all. This is very strange."

Horse was sad. Everyone was gone. He started walking to the trees on the hill. He wanted to see if he could find his friends.

As Horse walked, the trees got bigger and bigger. Why were the trees growing?

Then he saw Dog, Cow, and Duck. They were sitting under the trees. They were not small any more. They were very happy to see him.

"This is very, very strange," Horse said as he sat down next to his three friends.

If the animals had known one fact, they wouldn't have been upset. What is that?

Non-Fiction Comprehension Passages

Do Plants Sleep?

What do plants do at night when we are sleeping? Do they sleep too? In a way they do. Many plants open their flowers in the day and close them at night. Then they look like they are sleeping. This keeps the insides of the flowers from getting cold and wet. Bees and butterflies like to visit flowers that are open in the daytime.

Some flowers stay open all night. Moths like to visit these flowers.

One funny plant is the four-o'clock. This plant doesn't open its flowers until four o'clock in the afternoon. Then it stays awake all night!

Sink or Float

What things sink and what things float in the water?

Many things can float on water. A leaf floats when it falls in a pond. A boat floats when it moves on a river. A bath toy floats in the bathtub. Even birds float on top of the water.

Some things sink. A rock sinks when you throw it in a lake. Coins and keys sink in water. Bikes and wagons will sink when they are put in deep water.

You can sink or float! When you jump in a pool or lake, you push water away from yourself. This makes you sink. When you lie on your back in water, you float because the water holds you up.

Fiction

The Boys and the Frogs

One day some boys were playing near a pond. They saw some frogs in the water. The boys began to throw rocks at the frogs. The frogs were frightened.

One of the frogs put his head out of the water. The frog cried out, "Stop! Stop! What's fun for you is hurting us!"

A New Beginning

Ann walked slowly to the door. She looked into the classroom. New faces looked back at her. Ann wanted to go inside, but her feet wouldn't move. Her mother's hand felt good. She didn't want to let go.

Ann didn't like this new school. She missed her friends. She was sad that her family had moved to this new town. Things were so different here.

"I'm not going in," Ann said out loud.

Ann, you'll be fine," said her mother. "These children will be your friends. It will just take a little time."

Ann looked at the faces in the room again. There were boy faces and girl faces. There were faces of all kinds. They were all children like her. Some of the faces smiled at her. Ann smiled back. She let go of her mother's hand and went in to meet her new friends.

Jake at the Park

Jake ran to the park gate. He was so excited! He had never seen so many rides.

Jake's family stood in a long line. He thought they would never get in the park. At last, Dad was able to buy the tickets. Jake looked around with wide eyes as his family walked into the park.

"What do you want to do first?" his dad asked.

"I want to ride the roller coaster," said Jake.

Jake and his dad rode the roller coaster. Jake's mom and his little brother, Stevie, waited for them.

Next, Mom and Dad took Stevie on an airplane ride. That one was too slow for Jake. He waved to Stevie every time the airplane passed by. Jake laughed when he heard Stevie's happy squeals. He was happy that Stevie was having fun.

Then they stopped to have lunch. Jake got a corn dog, his favorite. He shared his drink with Stevie.

After lunch, Jake rode the Boomerang and the Rocket. Jake liked these rides because they were fast and exciting. He imagined that he was a brave space pilot. Up he zoomed, taking the other riders high into the sky. Then they all fell down fast and zipped up into outer space again. When the rides stopped, Jake was happy he had brought everyone safely back to earth.

Finally, the whole family went swimming in the water park to cool off.

The Surprise

Mary sat by the window. It was raining again. It had been raining for the last two days.

"There's nothing to do," cried Mary.

Just then, Aunt Kerrie walked in the front door. She was carrying a big box.

"What's in the box, Aunt Kerrie?" asked Mary.

"It's a surprise!" said Aunt Kerrie. She set the box on the table and walked over to talk with Mary's mom.

Suddenly the box began to shake. Then Mary heard a noise.

A soft "Meow" came from the box.

Aunt Kerrie came back into the room. She was caring a bowl of water and a toy mouse. Mary was excited. "I know what's in the box!" she laughed.

The Pet Rock

"A rock can be any pet you want it to be," said Mother. "You don't need to feed it. You don't need to walk it. It doesn't make a mess. It is a good pet to have."

I looked at the rock again. I had to do something fast. I got some paint and painted a face on the rock. Then I put the rock in a box. I put grass around it and put the lid on the box. Then I ran to school.

All the kids wanted to see what I had in the box.

"It's my pet," I said.

"What does it look like?" asked Tim.

"It looks like a rock," I said.

"What does it eat?" asked Molly.

"Nothing," I said.

I took the rock out of the box. "This is my pet rock," I said laughing.

Tim and Molly laughed too. They said I had the best pet!

Why was Mike's pet easy to care for?

Kate and Maria

Kate and Maria were running on the sidewalk. Maria didn't see a tree branch that had fallen across the sidewalk. Maria tripped and fell. She hurt her knee. She had a hard time walking home.

"Stay here, Maria," said Kate. "I'll run home and ask my mother to come and help you."

"Thank you," said Maria. She felt very lucky to have a good friend like Kate.

You can tell from this story that Kate

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D.___is not a good friend

Stan's Stuff

What is it about stuff? Most of us want more stuff. We want better stuff. We just can't seem to get enough stuff.

Stan was a kid who liked stuff. His bedroom was full of stuff. Everywhere Stan went, he found more stuff. But Stan didn't throw anything away.

Stan had boxes of rocks. He had jars of shiny new pennies and jars of seeds. Tall stacks of books sat next to Stan's bed. Old party hats and flat balloons hung from his window. There was stuff all over, but Stan didn't mind at all.

One day, Mrs. Brown who lived next door called to Stan. "Stan, I have a surprise for you!"

Mrs. Brown gave Stan a big box of old toys. Inside were boats, cars, and trucks. Stan could see a little clown and a fuzzy rabbit. Stan was very happy to have more stuff.

"Do anything you want to with these, Stan," said Mrs. Brown.

Stan thanked Mrs. Brown and took the box home. He set the box on his bed. There wasn't any other place to put it.

That night, Stan could not get in his bed. The box was there. So, he took his blanket and pillow and tried to sleep on the hall floor. It didn't work.

In the morning, Stan's mother was not happy. She said, "Stan, that mess must be cleaned up." Stan knew he had to think of a plan.

At school, Stan told the other children to come to his house that afternoon. Stan ran home after school. He took boxes of rocks and jars of seeds outside. He took the big box of toys. He worked hard putting everything on the grass in front of his house.

When the other children came, Stan told them to take what they wanted. Soon there was nothing left on the grass. Stan's friends were very happy. Stan was happy too. Tonight he could sleep in his bed.

Read this sentence from the passage.

There was stuff all over, but Stan didn't mind.

What word means the same as *mind* in this sentence?

A.___brain
B.___work
C.___think
D. care

Eggs

Eggs are an important food. Most of the eggs we eat come from chickens.

An egg is formed inside a hen. The hen sits on her eggs to keep them warm. Inside the shell, a chick is starting to grow. The white and the yolk of the egg will nourish the chick until it hatches. They are the chick's only food.

The hen spends most of her time on the nest until the chicks are born. The egg's hard shell protects the chick. Chicks grow fast inside the egg. In only twenty-one days, the chicks are ready to hatch.

Suddenly, the shell begins to crack. Then a tiny little beak pokes through. The little chick works hard to come out of the egg. In just a few hours, it can eat and walk by itself.

<u>Seeds</u>

Seeds travel in many ways. Animals, wind, water and people carry seeds.

Seeds stick to an animal's fur. The animal gives the seeds a ride to a new place. The seeds fall off and grow in this new place.

Seeds stick to your hair and clothes. If you walk through some plants in your socks, you may see seeds stuck to your socks. When you

walk under a tree, seeds can fall on your hair. You carry the seeds to other places.

The wind blows seeds far away. Sometimes you can see seeds blowing in the air. You can blow on some plants and see the seeds fly away. This is what the wind does.

Some seeds fall in rivers. The water carries them to different places where they can grow.

All in a Day's Work

What do grown-ups do when they go to work? Some work in offices, and some drive trucks. Some keep other people safe and healthy. Some teach children in school, and other play music for us to enjoy. Some have unusual jobs...like counting alligators.

Harry Dutton counts alligators in the state of Florida to make sure they aren't being over-hunted. At night, he goes out on the water in a boat and looks for alligators. He shines his flashlight along the shore and often sees the light shining back at him from the alligator's eyes.

Some grown-ups play with toys. Yes, it's their job. In toy companies, toy testers make sure every toy works and is safe before it is sent to the stores to sell. Toy testers yank on toys. They twist and hit toys. They drop toys and even step on them. Then, they check to see if the toys have any loose parts that might come off and choke a young child.

One woman enters contests for a job. Another cleans fish tanks at a city aquarium. Some grown-ups work at theme parks like Disneyworld. They dress up in bear, mouse, or dog costumes to entertain children.

People work at many different kinds of jobs. What kind of job would you like to do when you are grown up?

Animals of the Sea

Many different animals live in the sea. Some are mammals. Some are fish. Some are reptiles.

A dolphin is a mammal. A dolphin needs to breathe air and has live babies. Dolphins have smooth bodies and a strong tail. Dolphins can swim fast. Dolphins live in a group called a pod and eat fish. Dolphins are very smart and can talk to each other.

Seals are also mammals. Seals are smart, noisy, and playful. They swim fast, bark like dogs, and are covered with short fur. Seals like to eat fish.

Sharks also live in the sea. Sharks are one of the oldest kinds of animals. There are many different kinds of sharks. Most sharks eat other fish.

An octopus is a strange animal. It has a soft body, no bones, and eight legs. An octopus shoots black ink when it is in danger. An octopus can change the color of its skin,

Turtles are also sea animals. The leather back turtle is the biggest turtle in the world. The leather back turtle lays its eggs on land. It is covered with a leathery skin instead of a shell. Jellyfish are a leatherback turtle's favorite food.

The sea is home to all of these animals and many others. What other animals do you think live in the sea?

<u>Emus</u>

Emus have one big thing in common with ostriches, their close cousins. They can't fly! Emus do have stubby little wings. But for traveling, they depend on their long, strong legs.

Emus really need to get around. They eat food like seeds, flowers, fruits, tender leaves, and insects. These are found only in places with plenty of rain. So, when an area gets too dry, emus move one. They'll often walk hundreds of miles to find a new place to chow down.

When people feed emus, the birds become tame and often hang out where people are. They may even become pests by demanding food. That can be a problem. After all, you don't want to mess with a bird that can weigh 100 pounds or more and stands over 6 feet tall!

As long as there are plenty of wild places to roam in Australia, the birds will do just fine. That's good news for emus!

Water

How many ways have you used water today? Have you had a drink of water? Did you take a bath or a shower? Did you see a cloud or feel a raindrop?

Water has many shapes. Water can be a liquid. We can splash and swim in it. We can drink it. We can fill up a fishbowl or water a plant with it.

Frozen water is a solid. It can be an ice cube. It can be a big iceberg in the sea. It can be the ice you slip or skate on in the winter.

Water can be a gas, or vapor. Steam is heated water that floats in the air. Clouds are made of water droplets. Fog is a cloud near the ground. Rain, sleet, hail, and snow are all forms of water.

Water is all around us!

٩	icebergs
3	_steam
C	raindrops
D.	snow .

Kangaroos

Kangaroos like to hop. They use their strong back legs and tail to hop. When a kangaroo hops slowly, its tail thumps on the ground.

Kangaroos can only walk forward. Their tails keep them from walking backwards.

Kangaroos are friendly animals, but they will fight if they need to. They balance on their strong tail and kick the other animal with their back legs.

Kangaroos eat grass. They don't need a lot of water, but they like to live where there is grass to eat and shade to sit in. They will hop a long way to find the grass and water they need.

Kangaroos are fun to watch!

This passage would be found in

A	a science book.
B	_a story book.

C.___a book of games.

D.___an exercise book.